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## UNCERTIFICATED NAVIGATORS.

Some correspondence has ensued between the Merchant Service Guild and the Board of Trade upon the judgment of the Court of Inquiry at Otago, New Zealand, which investigated the circumstances of the loss of the British ship *Arcturion*. It appeared that the certificate of the captain was suspended for three months, and he was required to pay 15 guineas towards the costs of the proceedings. The guild appealed to the Board of Trade to cancel the decision, and pointed out that the report was not issued in this country until three months after it was given. The master of the *Arcturion* was the only certificated person on board, and the guild in the course of their representation stated:—"This case is one of many others which illustrate the necessity of British ships being required to carry a sufficient number of qualified officers. The mate of the *Arcturion* joined as A.B., had "no knowledge of navigation," and "could not even understand a chart"; the boatswain, "an intelligent A.B., acted as officer and had charge of a watch." The former is described as "not very intelligent," and in the navigation of the vessel "made things worse" by giving the boatswain, who relieved him, a depth of water of 25 fathoms instead of 15 fathoms, which made a very great difference in the safety or otherwise of the vessel. The Board of Trade, replying to the guild, state their inability to interfere with the decision of the Court, but have called the attention of the Marine Department, New Zealand, to the delay which apparently occurred in forwarding the report to this country. The guild are also drawing the attention of the Board to the "apparently unnecessary delay in issuing the report of the inquiry into the loss of the ship *Highland Forest*, on the coast of Western Australia. Although this inquiry was held on May 8 last the report was not issued until the 30th August.

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